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United States Department of State

Washington, D. C. 20520

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ACTION MEMORANDUM

S/S TGP

TO: G - Mr. Wirth

FROM: PRM - Theresa L. Rusch, Acting

SUBJECT: Emergency Fund Drawdown to meet Urgent and Unforeseen Needs of Refugees, Returnees, and Conflict Victims from Rwanda and Burundi

ISSUE FOR DECISION

Whether to recommend that the President authorize the use of up to \$20,000,000 from the U.S. Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance Fund (the Fund) for urgent and unforeseen needs of refugees, returnees, and conflict victims from Rwanda and Burundi.

ESSENTIAL FACTORS

To date, as many as 500,000 people have been killed and up to 2 million people have been displaced in Rwanda. Since April, 540,000 Rwandan refugees have sought safety in neighboring countries. The outflow continues. Of the over 600,000 Burundi refugees from the October 1993 coup attempt in Burundi, the 300,000 who had sought refuge in Rwanda have now been scattered by the Rwandan conflict. Taking into account Rwandan and Burundi refugees and returnees generated since last October, urgent assistance for over one million refugees is required at present. The conflict in Rwanda is continuing and has potential serious ramifications for the stability of

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: THEODORE SELLIN
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respond to the appeals of international, governmental, and non-governmental organizations. .

The current balance of the Fund is \$44,299,633. With this drawdown, only \$24,299,633 will remain. The Haitian migrant operation entails substantial direct operating costs as well as cost reimbursements and other payments to other governments. Apart from the remaining availabilities in the Fund, the Department of State has only very limited Economic Support Fund and refugee funds available for Haiti. If the \$20,000,000 is drawn down for Rwanda, therefore, it will be necessary for other agencies to bear a greater portion of the costs for Haiti. On balance, however, we believe the urgent needs in Rwanda and Burundi are so overwhelming that we should proceed with this drawdown.

Conclusion

Under section 2(c)(1) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as amended, the Fund may be drawn upon by the President to meet "unexpected urgent refugee and migration needs" whenever he determines that it is "important to the national interest" to do so. Drawdowns are not requested if sufficient funds are available or can be reprogrammed within the MRA appropriation, or if a request for supplemental appropriations is possible within the timing of particular program needs. A supplemental appropriation is not being considered, and MRA availabilities have been fully programmed and cannot be diverted.